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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

July 26, 2010

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The Honorable Sean Connaughton  
Secretary  
Virginia Department of Transportation  
PO Box 1475  
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Dear Sean

I have been openly critical of the cost of the tolls on the Dulles Greenway for several years and the increase that went into effect on July 1 only added fuel to the fire. During rush hours, it now costs \$4.50 to use the road, and if drivers are coming from or going onto the Dulles Toll Road the rate is \$5.25. That means a daily round trip would be \$10.50. Over the course of a month, a daily commuter could spend the equivalent of a car payment. If you live in one of the communities just off the Greenway, you could easily get on and off the road multiple times a day.

I have said it before, and will say it again: this is highway robbery. And, as you well know, the Greenway's tolls are not going to improve transportation in Virginia but rather go to the bottom line of Australian-based Macquarie Group, the parent company of the firm that owns the road.

While I am fully aware that the recent rate hike was approved by the State Corporation Commission (SCC) — against my strong objections, I need to add — drivers who use that road are being ripped off. The 14-mile Greenway is, or close to being, the most expensive toll road per mile in the country, and it is having a serious impact on people who live in Loudoun, Clarke and points farther west who use the road every day.

I write today for three reasons. The first is for you to consider supporting legislation that not only rolls back the previously approved toll increases, but provides consumers with greater protections as the state considers more public-private ventures to address the Commonwealth's transportation infrastructure. When the SCC approved the most recent toll increases in 2007, it readily admitted that its hands were tied when it came to making its decision, stating "the Commonwealth made a series of policy decisions that leave us little choice but to make the decision we make in this case." In my opinion, the current law protects the interests of the owner of the toll road rather than the consumers of the road. At public hearings to discuss the recent rate increases, almost no one spoke in favor of the proposed increase. A law which allows no ability to consider the burden on my constituents and others who use the Greenway to commute to work, or to take their children to day care or soccer practice is a law in need of revision.

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My second request is that the company which owns the Greenway be required to erect large signs at each of the entrances and exits of the road clearly stating the cost of the tolls. The signs should be large enough that drivers can read them regardless of what lane they are in, particularly as drivers approach the main toll booth from the east. The existing sign can only be read from the far right lane. There are large signs approaching the main toll plaza for the Dulles Toll Road. At minimum, the same signage should be at the main toll plaza of the Greenway.

Signs also need to be in place on local roads leading to the entrance ramps. For example, there is no sign listing the cost of the toll for drivers getting on the Greenway from the Route 7 bypass heading east. Posting the cost of the toll on a small sign a few hundred feet from a toll booth when exiting the Greenway onto a local road is unacceptable. Drivers have a right to know the cost of using the road before getting on the road, particularly in this age of the "E-Z Pass" where most people only see a statement at the end of the month.

My third request is that you appoint a task force made up of members of the General Assembly in northern Virginia whose districts are near the Greenway, local elected officials in Loudoun, Clarke, Frederick and Winchester, and citizens from the region to examine ways to make the road more user-friendly and potentially provide relief to the drivers who use – or would use – Greenway on a regular basis. The Commonwealth Transportation Board also should be engaged on this issue.

This is a quality of life issue for those people living along the Greenway or who use it on a daily basis. I hope you will seriously consider my requests.

Sincerely,

Frank R. Wolf  
Member of Congress

WE NEED TO DO SOMETHING  
TO HELP THE PEOPLE WHO  
USE THE ROAD.  
I thank you